

To: The Legislative Committee

Re: H.B. 5174 An Act to establish a Children's State Flower

Date: February 23, 2015

From: Kristine J. Mothersele

Please vote in favor of the above referenced bill to establish Michaela Petit's Four O'Clocks as the Children's State Flower. There are a number of excellent reasons to pass this bill, so I will only emphasize a couple of them.

First of all, the children of the state need a voice, a symbol, and a demonstration of their importance by the adults who should care for them. Too many young lives have been tragically and needlessly lost – far too many to violence, but also to preventable diseases, and most sadly, sheer neglect. What better symbol than a flower to stand for the youngest among us.

Second, the Four O'Clock flower propagates so well and has already been embraced by many groups of school children. They learn the most basic lesson – plant a small seed, tend to it with water and light, and something beautiful emerges. And then they learn that a single flower will produce even more seeds, yielding more flowers in the future, and so on. Horticulture 101, yes, but an even more important life lesson about nurturing a single seed.

Third, the beautiful and fragrant flower that is the Four O'clock will serve to sweetly honor the memory not only of young Michaela Petit, but any child that has left this earthly plane all too soon. It is the least we can do.

There are many more excellent reasons that will certainly be expressed by others in support of this legislative action.

I respectfully request that you vote in favor of H.B. 5174.

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